during peak hours of traffic at Delhi and Mumbai airports on account of unprecedented increase in air traffic. The development of infrastructure could not keep pace with the growth in traffic.

(c) Yes, Sir. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has also taken initiatives to improve the infrastructure at Mumbai and Delhi like construction of parallel taxiways, high speed taxiways, additional parking bays etc.

(d) The existing runway facilities at Delhi and Mumbai are being used near optimally to handle the flights within the given infrastructural constraints. AAI has also taken up construction of additional parking bays on the space available at Delhi and Mumbai Airports.

(e) A GIobal Technical Advisor has been engaged by AAI to assist in the process of restructuring of Delhi/Mumbai airports. Construction of second parallel runway at IGI Airport and additional taxiways have been included in the Mandatory Capital Projects to be undertaken by the Joint Venture Company (JVC) who will operate these airports after restructuring.

Inflow of tourists in Madhya Pradesh

†*223. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to constant neglect of main tourist centres of Madhya Pradesh, there is continuous decrease in the number of tourists going there;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government have any figures regarding the number of foreign tourists who visited Khajuraho during the last one year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) The State Government and the Central Government are committed to develop the Tourist locations of the State with a view to attracting more domestic and foreign tourists. As per the data provided by the State Government, 86,09,426 domestic tourists visited Madhya Pradesh during 2004 against 59,68,716 visits during 2003

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

showing an increase of 44%. Similarly, during 2004, 1,45,375 foreign tourists visited the State against 92,273 foreign tourists during 2003 showing an increase of 57%.

(c) and (d) As per the information received from the State Government, about 62,100 foreign tourists visited Khajuraho during 2004 against 37,400 during 2003 showing an increase of about 66% in a year.

Improvement in air traffic infrastructure

*224. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of ATC officers at most of the major airports, which is making our airports unsafe;

(b) what steps have been taken to improve the infrastructure with 63 per cent increase in air traffic in the last five years; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that due to lack of area control centres there are gaps in the Indian skies and if so, what steps have been taken to remove these gaps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There is some shortage of ATC officers at some airports. However, there is no compromise on safety as all the ATC units are manned by qualified Air Traffic Controllers and ICAO Standards and Recommended Procedures are being followed strictly.

(b) Steps have been taken to provide additional ground infrastructure such as parallel taxiways, rapid exit taxiways and parking stands to enhance airside capacity at major airports. Additional air traffic routes through airport capacity (EMARSSH) project and Reduced Vertical Separation Minima (RVSM) have also been implemented to accommodate more number of aircraft in a defined airspace. Automatic Dependent System/ Controller Pilot Data Link Communication system has been installed at Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi and Mumbai airports. In addition, the Air Traffic Control facilities are also being regularly augmented through improvement of Communication, Navigation & Surveillance infrastructure, on the basis of the requisition received from user agencies so as to meet the growing air traffic requirements.